

**HUGHES**

**Application No. 09/623,977**

**January 5, 2004**

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Currently, claims 1-17 are pending in this application.

**Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103:**

Claims 1-8 and 10-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Ludwig et al (U.S. '539, hereinafter "Ludwig"). Claims 1 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Curry et al (U.S. Patent Application publication '115 A1, hereinafter "Curry"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

For a reference to anticipate a claim, each element must be found, either expressly or under principles of inherency, in the reference. Applicant submits that neither Ludwig nor Curry discloses each element of the claimed invention. In particular, Applicant submits that neither Ludwig nor Curry discloses "a plurality of terminal equipments for receiving individual channels, each of the terminal equipments having means to separately process each channel to provide a plurality of outputs, each output representing one of the other terminal equipments," as required by independent claim 1 and its dependents. Similarly, Applicant submits that neither Ludwig nor Curry discloses "in which each of the plurality of terminal equipments processes each channel separately to provide a plurality of outputs, such output each representing a respective one of the other terminal equipments," as required by independent claim 10 and its dependents.

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The present claimed invention thus requires more than one of the terminals having the capability of separately processing each channel to provide a plurality of outputs. Each output represents one of the other terminal equipments. This feature is not disclosed by Ludwig or Curry. For example, while Curry discloses a conference bridge 370 which can be placed “virtually anywhere” in the disclosed configuration, Curry fails to disclose the above claimed feature. The purpose of bridge 370 is to allow multiple parties to participate in a same call, and this must imply a single location. Curry fails to disclose providing more than one of the terminal equipments having the capability of separately processing each channel to provide a plurality of outputs, each output representing one of the other terminal equipments.

Ludwig also fails to disclose the above claimed feature. In particular, the passage on col. 17, lines 48-58 merely refers to the use of a second echo canceller which may be used to accommodate stereo audio in teleconferencing.

Independent claims 3 and 12 require a conference bridge identifying currently active input channels and transmitting only those active channels over a multichannel connection together with control information identifying the transmitted channels. Applicant submits that neither Ludwig nor Curry discloses this claimed feature.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that none of the pending claims are anticipated by Ludwig or Curry and thus respectfully requests that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 over Ludwig and Curry be withdrawn.

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Claims 9 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Ludwig. Since claims 9 and 15 depend at least indirectly from independent claims 1 and 10, respectively, Applicant submits that all of comments regarding Ludwig made above with respect to claims 1 and 10 apply equally to claims 9 and 15, respectively. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 9 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

**New Claims:**

New claims 16-17 have been added to provide additional protection for the invention. New claims 16 and 17 require the limitations recited in amended claims 1 and 10, respectively. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 16 and 17 are allowable for at least the reasons discussed above. Claims 16 and 17 each further requires a plurality of terminal equipments for receiving individual independent monaural channels. Applicant submits that these claims are allowable. For example, Ludwig implies that an incoming stereo signal is used by the Ludwig system, rather than independent mono channels.

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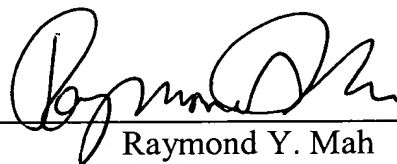
**Conclusion:**

Applicant believes that this entire application is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests a notice to this effect. If the Examiner has any questions or believes that an interview would further prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

**NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.**

By: \_\_\_\_\_



Raymond Y. Mah  
Reg. No. 41,426

RYM:sl

1100 North Glebe Road, 8th Floor  
Arlington, VA 22201-4714  
Telephone: (703) 816-4044  
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100